

WE CLAIM:

1. An electronic sourcing system comprising:

means for maintaining a catalog database of data relating to catalog items from at least two vendor product catalogs;

means for entering product information that at least partially describes at least one item desired to be requisitioned;

means for searching the catalog database for at least one catalog item from said vendor product catalogs that matches the information for said desired item;

means for building a requisition including an entry for said desired item based upon data obtained from said catalog database relating to the matching catalog item, said data identifying at least a vendor and a vendor catalog number for the matching catalog item; and

means for processing said requisition to generate a purchase order including an entry for an item corresponding to said matching catalog item.

2. The electronic sourcing system of claim 1, wherein said purchase order entry identifies at least said vendor catalog number for said matching catalog item.

3. The electronic sourcing system of claim 1, wherein said requisition building means includes a means for converting said vendor and vendor catalog number into a corresponding other vendor and other vendor catalog number, and wherein said purchase order entry identifies at least said other vendor catalog number for said matching catalog item.

means for maintaining a catalog database of data relating to catalog items from at least two vendor product catalogs;

means for searching the catalog database for at least first and second catalog items from said vendor product catalogs, each of said first and second catalog items obtained from a different respective one of said first and second vendor product catalogs and matching the information for a different respective one of said first and second desired items;

means for processing said requisition to generate at least first and second purchase orders, each to a different supplier and each including an entry for an item corresponding to a different one of said first and second matching catalog items.

5. The electronic sourcing system of claim 4, wherein at least said first purchase order identifies at least said vendor and vendor catalog number for said first matching catalog item.

7. The electronic sourcing system of claim 4, wherein said requisition building means includes a means for converting said vendors and vendor catalog numbers for said first and second matching catalog items into corresponding first and second other vendors and first and second other vendor catalog numbers, and wherein the entry of each of said first and second purchase orders respectively identifies at least a different one of said first and second other vendor catalog numbers.

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means for entering product information that at least partially describes items desired to be requisitioned;

means for generating an order list that includes at least one selected matching catalog item;

means for processing said requisition to generate a purchase order including an entry for an item corresponding to said matching catalog item.

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11. An electronic sourcing system comprising:

means for maintaining a catalog database containing data relating to catalog items from at least first and second vendor product catalogs;

means for entering product information that at least partially describes items desired to be requisitioned;

means for searching the catalog database  
for catalog items from said vendor product catalogs  
that match the product information for said desired  
items;

means for building a requisition for said desired items using data obtained from said catalog database relating to the matching catalog items, said data identifying at least the vendors and vendor catalog numbers for the matching catalog items; and

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13. The electronic sourcing system of claim 11, wherein said requisition building means includes a means for converting said vendor and vendor catalog number into a corresponding other vendor and other vendor catalog number, and wherein said purchase order entry identifies at least said other vendor catalog number for said matching catalog item.

means for maintaining a catalog database containing data relating to catalog items from at least first and second vendor product catalogs;

means for entering product information that at least partially describes items desired to be requisitioned;

means for searching the catalog database for catalog items from said vendor product catalogs that match the product information for said desired items;

means for generating an order list that includes at least first and second selected matching catalog items, each from a different one of said vendor product catalogs;

means for building a requisition for said desired items using data obtained from said catalog database relating to said matching catalog items, said data identifying at least the vendors and vendor catalog numbers for the matching catalog items; and

means for processing said requisition to generate at least one purchase order including at least first and second entries for items each respectively corresponding to a different one of said first and second matching catalog items.

15. The electronic sourcing system of claim 14, wherein at least said first one of said purchase order entries identifies at least said vendor catalog number for said first matching catalog item.

16. The electronic sourcing system of claim 15, wherein said second one of said purchase order entries identifies at least said vendor catalog number for said second matching catalog item.

17. The electronic sourcing system of claim 14, wherein said requisition building means includes a

18. An electronic sourcing system comprising:

means for entering product information  
that at least partially describes items desired to be  
requisitioned; *a*

means for generating an order list that includes at least two selected matching catalog items, each from a different one of said vendor product catalogs;

means for processing said requisition to generate at least two purchase orders, each including an entry for an item corresponding to a different one of said matching catalog items.

20. The electronic sourcing system of claim 19, wherein said entry of at least the other of said two purchase orders identifies at least said vendor catalog number for said second matching catalog item.

21. The electronic sourcing system of claim 18, wherein said requisition building means includes a means for converting said vendors and vendor catalog numbers into corresponding other vendors and other vendor catalog numbers, and wherein at least said entry for at least one of said two purchase orders identifies at least one of said other vendor catalog numbers for one of said matching catalog items.

means for maintaining a catalog database containing data relating to catalog items from at least first and second vendor product catalogs;

means/for entering product information  
that at least partially describes a first item desired  
to be requisitioned;

means for searching the catalog database for catalog items from said vendor product catalogs that match the product information for said first desired item, and for selecting a matching catalog item from one of said catalogs;

means for subsequently entering product information that at least partially describes a second desired item to be requisitioned;



means for searching the catalog database for catalog items from said vendor product catalogs that match the product information for said second desired item, and for selecting a matching catalog item from another one of said catalogs;

means for building a requisition for said desired items using data obtained from said catalog database relating to the selected matching catalog items, said data identifying at least the vendors and vendor catalog numbers for the selected matching catalog items; and

means for processing said requisition to generate a plurality of purchase orders, each including an entry for an item corresponding to a different one of said matching catalog items.

23. The electronic sourcing system of claim 22, wherein said entry for at least one of said purchase orders identifies at least said vendor catalog number for one of said matching catalog items.

24. The electronic sourcing system of claim 22, wherein said requisition building means includes a means for converting said vendors and vendor catalog numbers into corresponding other vendors and other vendor catalog numbers, and wherein said entry for at least one of said two purchase orders identifies at least one of said other vendor catalog numbers for one of said matching catalog items.

25. An electronic sourcing system comprising:

means for maintaining a catalog database containing data relating to catalog items from at least first and second vendor product catalogs;

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means for entering product information that at least partially describes a first item desired to be requisitioned;

means for searching the catalog database for catalog items from said vendor product catalogs that match the product information for said first desired item, and for selecting a matching catalog item from one of said catalogs;

means for subsequently entering product information that at least partially describes a second desired item to be requisitioned;

means for searching the catalog database for catalog items from said vendor product catalogs that match the product information for said second desired item, and for selecting a matching catalog item from another one of said catalogs;

means for building a requisition for said desired items using data obtained from said catalog database relating to the selected matching catalog items, said data identifying at least the vendors and vendor catalog numbers for the selected matching catalog items; and

means for processing said requisition to generate at least one purchase order including at least first and second entries for items each respectively corresponding to a different one of said matching catalog items.

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26. The electronic sourcing system of claim 25, wherein said requisition building means includes a means for converting said vendors and vendor catalog numbers into corresponding other vendors and other vendor catalog numbers, and wherein at least one of said entries of said purchase order identifies at least

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one of said other vendor catalog numbers for one of said matching catalog items.

27. An electronic sourcing system comprising:

means for maintaining a catalog database containing data relating to catalog items from at least first and second vendor product catalogs;

means for entering product information that at least partially describes a first item desired to be requisitioned;

means for searching the catalog database for first catalog items, from at least one of said vendor product catalogs, that match the product information for said first desired item;

means for generating an order list that includes a selected one of said first matching catalog items from said one catalog;

means for subsequently entering product information that at least partially describes a second desired item to be requisitioned;

means for searching the catalog database for second catalog items, from another one of said vendor product catalogs, that match the product information for said second desired item;

means for adding to said order list a selected one of said second matching catalog items from said other one of said catalogs;

means for building a requisition for said desired items using data obtained from said catalog database relating to the selected first and second matching catalog items on said order list, said data identifying at least the vendors and vendor catalog numbers for said matching catalog items; and

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means for processing said a plurality of purchase orders, for an item corresponding to a first and second matching catalog

28. The electronic sourcing system said entry for at least one orders identifies at least said one of said matching catalog

29. The electronic sourcing system said requisition building means converting said vendors and vendors to corresponding other vendors catalog numbers, and wherein said of said two purchase orders identified of said other vendor catalog matching catalog items.

30. An electronic sourcing system:  
means for maintaining a catalog data relating to catalog items second vendor product catalogs  
means for entering product catalog at least partially describes items entered;  
means for searching the catalog items from said vendor product the product information for said  
means for generating an output at least two selected matching a different one of said vendor

28. The electronic sourcing system of claim 27, wherein said entry for at least one of said purchase orders identifies at least said vendor catalog number for one of said matching catalog items.

29. The electronic sourcing system of claim 27, wherein said requisition building means includes a means for converting said vendors and vendor catalog numbers into corresponding other vendors and other vendor catalog numbers, and wherein said entry for at least one of said two purchase orders identifies at least one of said other vendor catalog numbers for one of said matching catalog items.

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means for maintaining a catalog database containing data relating to catalog items from at least first and second vendor product catalogs;

means for entering product information that at least partially describes items desired to be requisitioned;

means for searching the catalog database for catalog items from said vendor product catalogs that match the product information for said desired items;

means for generating an order list that includes at least two selected matching catalog items, each from a different one of said vendor product catalogs;

means for processing said requisition to generate at least two purchase orders, each including an entry for an item corresponding to a different one of said matching catalog items.

means for maintaining a catalog database containing data including descriptive information relating to catalog items from at least first and second vendor product catalogs;

means for searching the catalog database  
for catalog items from said vendor product catalogs  
that match the product information for said desired  
item;

means for selectively viewing the  
catalog segments identified by said hit list;

means for generating an order list of desired items at least one of which is a desired catalog item selected from a catalog segment identified by said hit list;

means for building a requisition for said order list of desired items using, for said desired catalog item, data obtained from said catalog database relating to the desired catalog item, said data identifying at least the vendor and vendor catalog number for the desired catalog item; and

means for processing said requisition to generate at least one purchase order including entries for items corresponding to said desired items, at least one of said entries corresponding to said matching catalog item.

32. The electronic sourcing system of claim 31, wherein said purchase order entry identifies at least said vendor catalog number for said matching catalog item.

33. The electronic sourcing system of claim 31, wherein said requisition building means includes a means for converting said vendor and vendor catalog number into a corresponding other vendor and other vendor catalog number, and wherein said purchase order entry identifies at least said other vendor catalog number for said matching catalog item.

34. An electronic sourcing system comprising:

means for maintaining a catalog database of data relating to catalog items from at least one vendor product catalog;

means for entering product information that at least partially describes at least one item desired to be requisitioned;

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means for determining that an item corresponding to the desired matching catalog item is available in inventory, and for processing said requisition to generate a purchase order including an entry identifying said inventory item.

means for searching the catalog database for catalog items, and for selecting at least one catalog item located as a result of the search;

means responsive to said requisition for generating a purchase order including an entry corresponding to said selected catalog item.

means responsive to said requisition for generating a purchase order including at least two entries, each for an item corresponding to a different one of said selected matching catalog items.

a computer maintaining a catalog database including at least two vendor product catalogs;



means responsive to said determining means for issuing a purchase order for said requisitioned desired catalog item from an inventory location including said catalog item.

building a requisition including an entry for said desired item based upon data obtained from said catalog database relating to the matching catalog item, said data identifying at least a vendor

and a vendor catalog number for the matching catalog item; and

processing said requisition to generate a purchase order including an entry for an item corresponding to said matching catalog item.

41. The sourcing method of claim 40, wherein said purchase order entry identifies at least said vendor catalog number for said matching catalog item.

42. The sourcing method of claim 40, wherein said requisition building step includes converting said vendor and vendor catalog number into a corresponding other vendor and other vendor catalog number, and wherein said purchase order entry identifies at least said other vendor catalog number for said matching catalog item.

43. A sourcing method comprising the steps of:

maintaining a catalog database of data relating to catalog items from at least two vendor product catalogs;

entering product information that at least partially describes respective first and second items desired to be requisitioned;

searching the catalog database for at least first and second catalog items from said vendor product catalogs, each of said first and second catalog items obtained from a different respective one of said first and second vendor product catalogs and matching the information for a different respective one of said first and second desired items;

building a requisition including at least first and second entries each for a different

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respective one of said first and second desired items and based upon data obtained from said catalog database relating to said respective matching catalog item, said data identifying at least a vendor and a vendor catalog number for said respective matching catalog item; and processing said requisition to generate at least first and second purchase orders, each to a different supplier and each including an entry for an item corresponding to a different one of said first and second matching catalog items.

44. The sourcing method of claim 43, wherein at least said first purchase order identifies at least said vendor and vendor catalog number for said first matching catalog item.

45. The sourcing method of claim 43, wherein said requisition building step includes converting said vendor and vendor catalog number for at least said first matching catalog item into a corresponding other vendor and other vendor catalog number, and wherein at least said first purchase order entry identifies at least said other vendor catalog number for said matching catalog item.

46. The sourcing method of claim 43, wherein said requisition building step includes converting said vendors and vendor catalog numbers for said first and second matching catalog items into corresponding first and second other vendors and first and second other vendor catalog numbers, and wherein the entry of each of said first and second purchase orders respectively identifies at least a different one of said first and second other vendor catalog numbers.

47. A sourcing method comprising:  
maintaining a catalog database  
containing data relating to catalog items from at least  
first and second vendor product catalogs;  
entering product information that at  
least partially describes items desired to be  
requisitioned;  
searching the catalog database for  
catalog items from said vendor product catalogs that  
match the product information for said desired items;  
generating an order list that includes  
at least one selected matching catalog item;  
building a requisition for said desired  
item using data obtained from said catalog database  
relating to the matching catalog item on said order  
list, said data identifying at least the vendor and  
vendor catalog number for the matching catalog item;  
and  
processing said requisition to generate  
a purchase order including an entry for an item  
corresponding to said matching catalog item.

48. The sourcing method of claim 47, wherein  
said purchase order entry identifies at least said  
vendor catalog number for said matching catalog item.

49. The sourcing method of claim 47, wherein  
said requisition building step includes converting said  
vendor and vendor catalog number into a corresponding  
other vendor and other vendor catalog number, and  
wherein said purchase order entry identifies at least  
said other vendor catalog number for said matching  
catalog item.

50. A sourcing method comprising:

maintaining a catalog database containing data relating to catalog items from at least first and second vendor product catalogs;

entering product information that at least partially describes items desired to be requisitioned;

searching the catalog database for catalog items from said vendor product catalogs that match the product information for said desired items;

generating an order list that includes at least two selected matching catalog items, each from a different one of said vendor product catalogs;

building a requisition for said desired items using data obtained from said catalog database relating to the matching catalog items, said data identifying at least the vendors and vendor catalog numbers for the matching catalog items; and

processing said requisition to generate at least one purchase order including an entry for an item corresponding to at least one of said matching catalog items.

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51. The sourcing method of claim 50, wherein said purchase order entry identifies at least said vendor catalog number for said matching catalog item.

52. The sourcing method of claim 50, wherein said requisition building step includes converting said vendor and vendor catalog number into a corresponding other vendor and other vendor catalog number, and wherein said purchase order entry identifies at least said other vendor catalog number for said matching catalog item.

53. A sourcing method comprising the steps of:

maintaining a catalog database containing data relating to catalog items from at least first and second vendor product catalogs;

entering product information that at least partially describes items desired to be requisitioned;

searching the catalog database for catalog items from said vendor product catalogs that match the product information for said desired items;

generating an order list that includes at least first and second selected matching catalog items, each from a different one of said vendor product catalogs;

building a requisition for said desired items using data obtained from said catalog database relating to said matching catalog items, said data identifying at least the vendors and vendor catalog numbers for the matching catalog items; and

processing said requisition to generate at least one purchase order including at least first and second entries for items each respectively corresponding to a different one of said first and second matching catalog items.

54. The sourcing method of claim 53, wherein at least said first one of said purchase order entries identifies at least said vendor catalog number for said first matching catalog item.

55. The sourcing method of claim 54, wherein said second one of said purchase order entries identifies at least said vendor catalog number for said second matching catalog item.

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56. The sourcing method of claim 53, wherein said requisition building step includes converting said vendors and vendor catalog numbers into corresponding other vendors and other vendor catalog numbers, and wherein at least one of said purchase order entries identifies at least one of said other vendor catalog numbers for one of said matching catalog items.

57. A sourcing method comprising the steps of:

maintaining a catalog database containing data relating to catalog items from at least first and second vendor product catalogs;

entering product information that at least partially describes items desired to be requisitioned;

searching the catalog database for catalog items from said vendor product catalogs that match the product information for said desired items;

generating an order list that includes at least two selected matching catalog items, each from a different one of said vendor product catalogs;

building a requisition for said desired items using data obtained from said catalog database relating to the matching catalog items, said data identifying at least the vendors and vendor catalog numbers for the matching catalog items; and

processing said requisition to generate at least two purchase orders, each including an entry for an item corresponding to a different one of said matching catalog items.

58. The sourcing method of claim 57, wherein said entry of at least one of said two purchase orders

identifies at least said vendor catalog number for said first matching catalog item.

59. The sourcing method of claim 58, wherein said entry of at least the other of said two purchase orders identifies at least said vendor catalog number for said second catalog item.

60. The sourcing method of claim 57, wherein said requisition building step includes converting said vendors and vendor catalog numbers into corresponding other vendors and other vendor catalog numbers, and wherein at least said entry for at least one of said two purchase orders identifies at least one of said other vendor catalog numbers for one of said matching catalog items.

61. A sourcing method comprising the steps of:

- maintaining a catalog database containing data relating to catalog items from at least first and second vendor product catalogs;
- entering product information that at least partially describes a first item desired to be requisitioned;
- searching the catalog database for catalog items from said vendor product catalogs that match the product information for said first desired item, and for selecting a matching catalog item from one of said catalogs;
- subsequently entering product information that at least partially describes a second desired item to be requisitioned;
- searching the catalog database for catalog items from said vendor product catalogs that



match the product information for said second desired item, and for selecting a matching catalog item from another one of said catalogs;

building a requisition for said desired items using data obtained from said catalog database relating to the selected matching catalog items, said data identifying at least the vendors and vendor catalog numbers for the selected matching catalog items; and

processing said requisition to generate a plurality of purchase orders, each including an entry for an item corresponding to a different one of said matching catalog items.

62. The sourcing method of claim 61, wherein said entry for at least one of said purchase orders identifies at least said vendor catalog number for one of said matching catalog items. *A*

63. The sourcing method of claim 61, wherein said requisition building step includes converting said vendors and vendor catalog numbers into corresponding other vendors and other vendor catalog numbers, and wherein said entry for at least one of said two purchase orders identifies at least one of said other vendor catalog numbers for one of said matching catalog items.

64. A sourcing method comprising the steps of:  
maintaining a catalog database containing data relating to catalog items from at least first and second vendor product catalogs;

entering product information that at least partially describes a first item desired to be requisitioned;

searching the catalog database for catalog items from said vendor product catalogs that match the product information for said first desired item, and for selecting a matching catalog item from one of said catalogs;

subsequently entering product information that at least partially describes a second desired item to be requisitioned;

searching the catalog database for catalog items from said vendor product catalogs that match the product information for said second desired item, and for selecting a matching catalog item from another one of said catalogs;

building a requisition for said desired items using data obtained from said catalog database relating to the selected matching catalog items, said data identifying at least the vendors and vendor catalog numbers for the selected matching catalog items; and

processing said requisition to generate at least one purchase order including at least first and second entries for items each respectively corresponding to a different one of said matching catalog items.

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65. The sourcing method claim 64, wherein said requisition building step includes converting said vendors and vendor catalog numbers into corresponding other vendors and other vendor catalog numbers, and wherein at least one of said entries of said purchase order identifies at least one of said other vendor catalog numbers for one of said matching catalog items.

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66. A sourcing method comprising the steps of:

- maintaining a catalog database containing data relating to catalog items from at least first and second vendor product catalogs;
- entering product information that at least partially describes a first item desired to be requisitioned;
- searching the catalog database for first catalog items, from at least one of said vendor product catalogs, that match the product information for said first desired item;
- generating an order list that includes a selected one of said first matching catalog items from said one catalog;
- subsequently entering product information that at least partially describes a second desired item to be requisitioned;
- searching the catalog database for second catalog items, from another one of said vendor product catalogs, that match the product information for said second desired item;
- adding to said order list a selected one of said second matching catalog items from said other one of said catalogs;
- building a requisition for said desired items using data obtained from said catalog database relating to the selected first and second matching catalog items on said order list, said data identifying at least the vendors and vendor catalog numbers for said matching catalog items; and
- processing said requisition to generate a plurality of purchase orders, each including an entry

67. The sourcing method of claim 66, wherein said entry for at least one of said purchase orders identifies at least said vendor catalog number for one of said matching catalog items.

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maintaining a catalog database containing data relating to catalog items from at least first and second vendor product catalogs;

searching the catalog database for catalog items from said vendor product catalogs that match the product information for said desired items;

building a requisition for said desired items using data obtained from said catalog database relating to the matching catalog items, said data

processing said requisition to generate at least two purchase orders, each including an entry for an item corresponding to a different one of said matching catalog items.

maintaining a catalog database containing data including descriptive information relating to catalog items from at least first and second vendor product catalogs;

searching the catalog database for  
catalog items from said vendor product catalogs that  
match the product information for said desired item;

selectively viewing the catalog segments  
identified by said hit list;

building a requisition for said order list of desired items using, for said desired catalog item, data obtained from said catalog database relating to the desired catalog item, said data identifying at least the vendor and vendor catalog number for the desired catalog item; and



determining that an item is required matching catalog item and for processing said requisition purchase order including assigning said inventory item.

74. The sourcing method of requisition order entry identifies a requisition number for said item in inventory.

75. The sourcing method of requisition building step includes assigning vendor catalog number into requisition and other vendor catalog number and requisition purchase order entry identifies a requisition number for said item in inventory.

76. A sourcing method comprising:  
maintaining a catalog of vendor product catalogs;  
searching the catalog of vendor product catalogs;  
selecting at least one requisition as a result of the search;  
generating a requisition purchase order for said requisition as one requisition purchase order;  
generating, from said requisition purchase order, a requisition purchase order including an entry corresponding to said requisition purchase order catalog item.

77. A sourcing method comprising:  
maintaining a catalog of vendor product catalogs;

74. The sourcing method of claim 73, wherein  
purchase order entry identifies said vendor  
number for said item in inventory.

75. The sourcing method of claim 73, wherein the composition building step includes converting said vendor catalog number into a corresponding vendor and other vendor catalog number, and said purchase order entry identifies said other catalog number for said item in inventory.

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maintaining a catalog database of at  
or product catalogs:

searching the catalog database for

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selecting at least one catalog item
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generating a requisition including at

generating, from said requisition, a

77. A sourcing method comprising the steps

maintaining a catalog database of at

generating, responsive to said requisition, a purchase order including at least two entries, each for an item corresponding to a different one of said selected matching catalog items.

responsive to determining that said catalog item is available in at least one of said inventory locations, issuing a purchase order for said requisitioned desired catalog item from that inventory location.

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